

VZCZCXRO9954
PP RUEHQU
DE RUEHPU #0235 0461834
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
P 151834Z FEB 08
FM AMEMBASSY PORT AU PRINCE
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7688
INFO RUEHZH/HAITI COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHBR/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA PRIORITY 1801
RUEHSA/AMEMBASSY PRETORIA PRIORITY 1606
RUEHQU/AMCONSUL QUEBEC PRIORITY 1029
RUMIAAA/HQ USSOUTHCOM J2 MIAMI FL PRIORITY
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 1428

UNCLAS PORT AU PRINCE 000235

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

STATE FOR WHA/EX AND WHA/CAR
S/CRS
SOUTHCOM ALSO FOR POLAD
STATE PASS AID FOR LAC/CAR
INR/IAA
WHA/EX PLEASE PASS USOAS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [HA](#)

SUBJECT: FEBRUARY 11 REPATRIATION OF 90 HAITIAN MIGRANTS

11. On February 11, the US Coast Guard (USCG) transferred 90 Haitian migrants into the custody of the GoH in Port-au-Prince, Haiti. On February 4, the USCG intercepted a fast boat carrying 17 Haitian, 1 Chinese and 3 Jamaican migrants 11.5 nautical miles east of Jupiter Inlet, Florida. Three Bahamians, who were operating the boat, were taken into custody. On February 6, the USCG intercepted a sail freighter carrying 73 migrants 27 nautical miles southwest of Acklins Island, Bahamas.

12. The majority of migrants on the fast boat denied paying a fee for their journey, claiming instead to have boarded the vessel right before its departure. One migrant, however, told Poloff that he paid \$4,000 for the trip. A friend, he claimed, notified him via telephone about the journey, after which the migrant, with financial support from relatives in the U.S., paid the fee. Another migrant, who denied having paid for the clandestine trip, told Poloff that a friend on Ile de la Tortue, a Haitian island off the northwest coast, informed him about the trip via telephone. This migrant and two others were in the Bahamas for only six months before making this trip. Many others claimed to have been in the Bahamas illegally for 3 to 4, or over 10 years.

13. The migrants on the sail freighter, who said that Nassau, Bahamas was their destination, claimed that they collectively stole the sail freighter. They reported that they had relatives in Nassau as well as in the U.S.

14. For calendar year 2008, the USCG has repatriated 464 migrants to Haiti.
SANDERSON